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Roundtable Editor: Thomas Maddux
Reviewers: John L. Harper, Geir Lundestad, Elizabeth Spalding, Jeremi Suri

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Introduction by Thomas Maddux, California State University, Northridge

For decades historians of the Cold War have fought and debated Cold War issues and in some respects continued their own "Cold War" long after the end of this conflict. The disagreements have flowed with charges of triumphalism over the results and disputes over which side, the Soviet Union or the United States, was responsible for the start of the conflict, which side escalated the disagreements coming out of the results of WWII into the Cold War, which side intensified the conflict as opposed to seeking accommodation to lessen the discord, and which side held the most responsibility in extending the conflict from Europe to the rest of the globe and into space.

Melvyn Leffler has again shifted the focus of debate with *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War*. In his prize-winning *Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration and the Cold War*, Leffler prompted historians to shift away from intense debates on what consideration—open door for American capitalism, security, domestic politics, an imperial quest for dominance—had the most important impact on American Cold War politics. In evaluating the interacting impact of these considerations, Leffler significantly elevated the historiography on U.S. policies. By making extensive use of primary source publications, translations, and recently scholarly assessments on Soviet policy, such as Vlad Zubok's *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (2007) [the subject of a forthcoming H-Diplo roundtable], and Odd Arne Westad's *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (2005), Leffler has reinforced the literature that explores equally the perspectives, policy formulation, and implementation results for both sides.

The title of Leffler's study also points to his support of recent scholarly efforts to incorporate ideology in assessments of both Cold War camps. The battle for "the soul of mankind" is about the importance that policy makers placed on advancing and defending their respective systems and visions on a global basis. As Leffler suggests, his book "is about ideology and memory. It is about structure and agency. It argues that officials in Washington and Moscow intermittently grasped the consequences of the Cold War, glimpsed the possibilities of détente, and yearned for peace, but they could not escape their fears or relinquish their dreams." (8)

The reviewers do have some reservations about Leffler's selection of case studies, about whether there really were "lost opportunities" for accommodation, and on specific interpretations as well as on decision-making, implementation, the relationship of his study to Cold War historiography and to international relations theory. However, they recommend that you read it, challenge it, and profit from it.

(1) Leffler begins with the question of why Soviet and American leaders did not stop the Cold War sooner and examines five case studies: the origins of the Cold War in 1945-48; the 1953-54 manoeuvres of Dwight Eisenhower and the post-Stalin leadership; Nikita Khrushchev and American leaders in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis; the erosion of détente under Brezhnev and Carter, 1975-1980; and the end of the Cold

War, 1985-1990. Geir Lundestad questions whether there really were "lost opportunities" before the 1980s to end the conflict, or does Leffler's analysis suggest a Shakespearian dynamic, according to Jeremi Suri, in which leaders desire accommodation but pursue policies that work against their desires? They reach conclusions similar to many of the authors in Klaus Larres and Kenneth Osgood, eds., *The Cold War after Stalin's Death: A Missed Opportunity for Peace?* (2006) who note far more competition than opportunities for ending the conflict.

(2) The reviewers question a number of Leffler's interpretations, assumptions, and selections. John Harper, for example, wonders if Stalin, who "despised signs of foreign communist autonomy, really felt that the communization of Western Europe was desirable, let alone possible?" Does Stalin really fit with Leffler's paradigm of the struggle for the "soul of mankind"? Lundestad suggests that Leffler could have identified more precisely where the various efforts at détente stood on a continuum from avoiding conflict to ending conflict. Harper also wonders about the omission of Franklin Roosevelt, who started the ball rolling on the American side, and Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, who launched détente. The latter are covered as a backdrop to Leonid Brezhnev, but Leffler's main focus is on Jimmy Carter. The reviewers consider Leffler's assessment of Carter as one of the most interesting in the book, but questions persist about the viability of détente by 1976 on the U.S. side and the degree of Brezhnev's and the Soviet Politburo's commitment to it.

(3) Jeremi Suri, with some support from the other reviewers, raises questions concerning Leffler's definition of decision-making, implementation, and the role of evolving ideology, memory, and the international system. "Powerful leaders—a very small group—receive information, assess conditions, define aims, and then act in Leffler's narrative," according to Suri, who suggests there should be more consideration of the impact of outsiders, non-state actors, and international organizations. Harper and Lundestad make similar points with their respective wish for more context, such as the political groundswell in the U.S. against détente, and a discussion of the impact of allies on both sides. Policy implementation, Suri notes, should include more consideration of the significant impact of bureaucracies and interest groups on both sides. Suri also suggests more attention to the role of evolving ideologies—Leffler considers this most significantly with Reagan and Gorbachev—the impact of Cold War memories on the conflict, and more analysis on the nature and impact of the Cold War international system.

(4) In focusing on Leffler's relationship to Cold War historiography, Elizabeth Spalding raises a number of questions concerning Leffler's relationship to and use of international relations concepts and his central emphasis on ideology. Spalding suggests that Leffler combines George Kennan's realism with structural realism "in which the (in)security structure of the international environment supersedes human agency and national interests." (2) Leffler then mixes up an incompatible stew, according to Spalding, by dropping ideology right in the middle of the pot, but Leffler's "interior case studies generally contradict his assertion of ideology's importance to the Cold War." (3) Leffler's emphasis on ideology does coincide with the increased

emphasis on this since the end of the Cold War in interpretations of both U.S. and Soviet policies.

(5) The reviewers point to Leffler's chapter on the end of the Cold War and his analysis on the contributions of Gorbachev and Reagan as well worth the price of the book. Leffler notes the critical importance of Reagan's desire for negotiation with the Soviet Union from 1981 on despite his belief that communism would fail, that the Soviet Union was an "evil empire", and that the U.S. needed to increase its defense spending significantly, aggressively contain the spread of communism, and contest it where it existed in Third World countries with the Reagan Doctrine. Spalding suggests that Leffler excessively minimizes the impact of Reagan's revitalized containment policies in forcing Gorbachev to change basic Cold War beliefs and policies. Leffler, however, suggests that Reagan contributed the most by his willingness to negotiate with Gorbachev and the reassurance he gave the Soviet leader that the U.S. did not threaten Soviet security. Reagan's contribution is even more significant considering the resistance he faced from conservatives, from many of his significant advisers, and from attentive foreign policy circles and Congress. On the other hand, Leffler emphasizes that Gorbachev changed the most with respect to his ideological preconceptions, his view of international relations, and his insistence that Moscow's allies stand on their own and address the demands of their own people rather than relying on Soviet intervention to bail them out. Furthermore, Gorbachev did not let Reagan's rhetoric, his stubbornness on the Strategic Defence Initiative, and his unwillingness to back off on contested issues such as Afghanistan, Angola, and Central America prevent him from pursuing the accommodation he believed was critical to allow for a reorientation of Soviet spending priorities and a hoped-for revitalization of a reformed Soviet system.

Participants:

Melvyn P. Leffler, co-chair of the America in the World Program, is Edward R. Stettinius Professor in the Department of History at the University of Virginia. He served as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at UVA from 1997-2001. In 1993, he won the Bancroft Prize for *Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (1992). His other books include *The Specter of Communism: the United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917-1953* (1994); and *The Elusive Quest: America's Pursuit of European and French Security, 1919-1933* (1979).

John L. Harper is Resident Professor of American Foreign Policy and European Studies at the Bologna Center of the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). He received an A.B. in History from Haverford College and a Ph.D. in European Studies from SAIS. He is the author of *America and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-1948* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), winner of the Helen and Howard Marraro Prize from the Society for Italian Historical Studies (in Italian translation as *America e la ricostruzione dell'Italia*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987); *American Visions of Europe: Franklin D. Roosevelt, George F. Kennan, and Dean G. Acheson* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), winner of the Robert H. Ferrell Prize from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations; and *American Machiavelli: Alexander Hamilton and the Origins of U.S. Foreign*

Policy (Cambridge University Press, 2004). Among his recent articles is "Anatomy of a Habit: America's Unnecessary Wars," in *Survival* Summer 2005. He is working on a book called *The Cold War* for Oxford University Press.

Geir Lundestad was born in 1945. Since 1990 he has been the Director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute and the Secretary of the Norwegian Nobel Committee (the committee awards the Nobel Peace Prize.) After having been a professor of history and American Civilization at the University of Tromsø from 1974 to 1990, since 1991 he has been an adjunct professor of international history at the University of Oslo. He has published a number of books on the origins of the Cold War and on American-European relations after 1945. His most recent book is *The United States and Western Europe Since 1945. From "Empire" by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift* (Oxford University Press, 2003, paperback, 2005).

Elizabeth Spalding is Associate Professor of Government at Claremont McKenna College, where she teaches U.S. foreign policy and American government and directs CMC's Washington Program. The author of *The First Cold Warrior: Harry Truman, Containment, and the Remaking of Liberal Internationalism*, she has contributed to several volumes on the presidency and U.S. foreign policy and written for the *Wilson Quarterly*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, and the *Claremont Review of Books*. Her current research interests include the war on terrorism, the beginnings and endings of the Cold War, religion and U.S. foreign policy, and the Wilsonian influence on modern American foreign policy. Her Ph.D. in government and foreign affairs is from the University of Virginia.

Jeremi Suri is Professor of history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a senior fellow at the University of Wisconsin's Center for World Affairs and the Global Economy. He is the author of *Henry Kissinger and the American Century* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007); *The Global Revolutions of 1968* (W.W. Norton, 2006); and *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Harvard University Press, 2003). Professor Suri was recently honored as one of America's "Top Young Innovators" by the Smithsonian Institution. Professor Suri received his Ph.D. from Yale University, his M.A. from Ohio University, and his B.A. from Stanford University.

Review by John L. Harper, the Johns Hopkins SAIS Bologna Center

At the heart of the study of the Cold War for those living through it were a series of questions: what were the factors driving the East-West conflict, what was the basic nature and trajectory of the international system, and would statesmen have the wit and the freedom from fate necessary to avoid Armageddon and secure a lasting peace? Writing in 1957, Raymond Aron believed that "The unity of the planet is manifestly tending to disintegrate. New centers of force, outside the boundaries of the Western and Soviet civilizations, are due to arise." Aron saw no possibility that either Washington or Moscow could reverse polycentrism and achieve a position of clear dominance, nor of an agreement between them to put an end to the Cold War. "Political wisdom can offer no more hopeful prospect than survival through moderation." Writing a year later, Aron's fellow sociologist C. Wright Mills saw a somewhat different picture: "The old international balance of several or of many relatively equal nation-states has been replaced by a polarized world. . . Then the mechanics of international affairs were often the mechanics of fate. But now the decisive interplay is between two superstates. In the international realm, events have become less subject to fate, more subject to human decision. Given the scope and the centralization of the means of power now organized in these two superstates, the role of explicit decision is enlarged." For Mills, the concentration of power in the hands of the United States and the Soviet Union--and within them in the hands of small elites—was a reason for optimism about the possibility of mastering fate and avoiding World War Three.[1]

John L. Harper *is Resident Professor of American Foreign Policy and European Studies at the Bologna Center of the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). He received an A.B. in History from Haverford College and a Ph.D. in European Studies from SAIS. He is the author of* America and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-1948 *(Cambridge University Press, 1986), winner of the Helen and Howard Marraro Prize from the Society for Italian Historical Studies (in Italian translation as* America e la ricostruzione dell'Italia*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987);* American Visions of Europe: Franklin D. Roosevelt, George F. Kennan, and Dean G. Acheson *(Cambridge University Press, 1994), winner of the Robert H. Ferrell Prize from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations; and* American Machiavelli: Alexander Hamilton and the Origins of U.S. Foreign Policy *(Cambridge University Press, 2004). Among his recent articles is "Anatomy of a Habit: America's Unnecessary Wars," in Survival Summer 2005. He is working on a book called* The Cold War *for Oxford University Press.*

Melvyn Leffler's new book is an attempt to come to grips, using the benefit of hindsight, with some of the same questions, for example, the nature of the post-war international realm, and the possibility of autonomous human decision within it. It is not, he makes clear, a general narrative but rather an examination of the relation between human agency and impinging reality during a series of watershed moments, or potential turning points, in the Cold War. The focus is on five sets of leaders during five important episodes: Josef

[1] Raymond Aron, *On War* (New York: Norton, 1968, first published in 1957), 120; C. Wright Mills, *The Causes of World War Three* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1958), 37.

Stalin and Harry Truman, 1945-1948; Georgi Malenkov and Dwight Eisenhower, 1953-1954; Nikita Khrushchev, John Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson, 1962-1965; Leonid Brezhnev and Jimmy Carter, 1975-1980; Mikhail Gorbachev, Ronald Reagan, and George H. W. Bush, 1985-1990. Fundamentally, what Leffler wants to explain is why, until 1985-1990, U.S. and Soviet leaders were unable and/or unwilling to bring an end to the Cold War.

To do so, he invokes four constant features, or "givens," making up the context of Cold War decision-maker and weighing upon individual leaders. First is the "configuration of power in the international system." (5) Typically, it presented a picture of impending threats to one's (or one's allies') security as well as tempting opportunities to extend one's influence, while not being susceptible to quick alteration. Next are domestic pressures and parameters, including "interest groups, public opinion, and powerful bureaucracies" with which U.S. and Soviet leaders had constantly to reckon. (5) Third are "constituents abroad, formal allies and sometimes informal clients, governments with their own interests that they pursue vigorously, sometimes with cunning and guile and sometimes with a dazzling candor. These clients are never as weak as they seem, and great powers aiming for hegemony cannot disregard them." (6) Finally, there are the historical experiences (for Soviet leaders the catastrophe of the war) and the political convictions that help to determine threat-perceptions and define ultimate objectives. In short, there are memory and ideology. (Let us define ideology as a secular religion: a set of beliefs purporting to explain reality, including the dynamics and direction of History, and indicating a path to temporal salvation. By its very nature, an ideology represents a limited perspective, reflecting the experience and interests of a particular group or nation, rather than, as its adepts claim, universal truth.[2]) If one of Leffler's factors is most important in explaining why the Cold War continued despite recurrent longings for peace and apparent opportunities to end it, it is this. As the book's title indicates, Leffler wants to emphasize that leaders on both sides saw the Cold War as a struggle "for the soul of mankind," and to establish the truth of their respective versions of History. It could not end until one (or both) of the antagonists had changed its view of the world.

The strengths of this book are at least three-fold. The first is that it helps to correct an old flaw in Cold War historiography by providing a scrupulously balanced picture of the selected episodes. It is practically unique among major studies in devoting virtually equal attention to Soviet and U.S. policy-making and deliberations. A second strength is the remarkable richness of the documentation. The author seems to have mined every available archival source and is familiar as well with an array of very recent secondary literature. One can only admire the energy and diligence that went into the preparation of this book. A third strength is the way in which the author handles his protagonists. There is a thumbnail biography of each, conveying with economy and skill their complexity as human beings, and how and why each had come to see the world as he did before arriving at the summit. These are followed by well-crafted accounts of the same figures exercising power. More often than not, the author convincingly shows, they were reacting to events

[2] This is my definition, but I don't think Leffler would object.

and struggling with the above-mentioned circumstances, the creatures, more than the masters, of pressing fears and hopes. Leffler writes of his characters, even those whose hands were covered with blood, with empathy and insight. His aim is not to moralize, but to reveal their motives and explain their actions in their own terms. In this he brilliantly succeeds.

Naturally, one can quibble over specifics and wish he had gone further on certain questions. Here are a few examples: Following Eduard Mark and others, he writes that Stalin pursued a cautious, "national front" strategy in the attempt to reconcile continued co-operation with the United States and Britain with his longer-term aim to dominate Western Europe. But did someone who (as Leffler points out, 77) despised signs of foreign communist autonomy, really feel that the communization of Western Europe was desirable, let alone possible? George Kennan argued that Stalin did not welcome the prospect of successful revolutions abroad that might lead to communist leaderships and movements independent of his will, and that might inspire and ally with opposition to his rule within the USSR. According to Milovan Djilas, Stalin "felt instinctively that the creation of revolutionary centers outside of Moscow could endanger its supremacy in world Communism . . . That is why he helped revolutions only up to a certain point—up to where he could control them—but he was always ready to leave them in the lurch whenever they slipped out of his grasp."[3]

This reviewer found Leffler's interpretation of Khrushchev's motives during the Cuba crisis to be a little frustrating. "He had conceived his gamble to put missiles in Cuba not only to protect Castro's revolution but to redress the strategic imbalance and allow for continued reductions in theater forces and military manpower. If Americans were faced with threats as grave as those facing his own country, he had thought, they would negotiate more seriously about disarmament and Germany." (166) Does this mean that Khrushchev aimed to use the missiles to try to settle the Berlin question on his terms (as some American historians have suggested, but as Khrushchev and his adviser Oleg Troyanovsky later denied)? Something similar can be said concerning the installation of SS-20 intermediate-range missiles in the 1970s. Leffler does not explain the reasoning behind a decision fraught with important (and presumably unintended) consequences for several of his protagonists. Nor does he deal adequately with the heated controversy in the United States concerning Soviet heavy inter-continental ballistic missiles. (If I am not mistaken, the phase "window of vulnerability," a staple of the tendentious domestic critique of détente, does not appear.)

This last point suggests a couple of weaknesses arising from the structure of the book. The first is simply that in choosing to focus on five well-defined moments, the author has excluded (except for passing references) personalities and events that are germane to the outcomes that he wants to explain. Take for example the chapter on 1975-1980, "The

[3] George F. Kennan, *Russia and the West Under Lenin and Stalin* (London: Hutchinson, 1961), 250-51. Milovan Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962)), 132. Curiously, neither of these classics appears in Leffler's bibliography.

Erosion of Détente." Leffler is excellent on Brezhnev and Carter (as well as on Zbigniew Brzezinski's hyperactivity and schematic outlook). But it is misleading to say that "Brezhnev killed détente" by invading Afghanistan in December 1979. (334) A good case can be made that détente had been mortally wounded when Carter took office in January 1977.[4] This had to do, *inter alia,* with the inherent contradictions in Nixon's and Kissinger's conception, the political fall-out from the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, and the relentless campaign waged against it by Republican conservatives and Cold War Democrats. Take as well the chapter on Stalin, Truman, and the origins of the Cold War. Like Richard Nixon, Franklin Roosevelt is but a shadowy presence. Yet a good case can be made that the grand alliance was fatally compromised by the time Truman took office in April 1945. This had to do, *inter alia,* with the inherent contradictions in FDR's policies, the political fall-out from Soviet behavior in Eastern Europe, and a growing conservative trend in the United States.

A second problem is that Leffler's dense, detailed narrative, while giving a vivid picture of how leaders saw the world day-to-day, tends at times to lose sight of the contextual factors that conditioned their policy choices. His highly-favorable, and by-and-large persuasive, portraits of Reagan and Gorbachev show that the former was capable of learning about (even if from a starting point of appalling ignorance) and of inspiring trust on the part of the adversary, whereas the latter was dogged and courageous in pursuit of a new perspective on international relations (even if as a means to a futile end: the renewal of socialism in the Soviet Union). But only in the book's conclusion does the reader hear in any detail about the "political groundswell" in the United States of the 1970s that was a fundamental factor in the overthrow of détente.[5] By the same token, only in the conclusion does the author discuss in a sustained way the structural decline of the Soviet economy and the implications for it of major innovations in information and communications technology. (460, 463) Finally, only in the conclusion does he say much about the contemporaneous political and budgetary pressures in the United States itself (Western European pressures are not mentioned) pushing Reagan, whether he liked it or not, in the direction of détente. The reader puts the book down with the sensation that these important developments were tacked on at the end. It must also be said that any choice of structure entails its trade-offs, and this is not to suggest that the author should have written a book different from the one he wanted to write. It is a fine one as it is.

To return briefly to the sociologists, Leffler's book demonstrates that Aron was right in his analysis--the international system was (and is) tending to become ever more difficult for any single power to dominate—but also that Wright's optimism was not unfounded.

[4] Despite Kissinger's suggestion otherwise, its future would not necessarily have been brighter if Gerald Ford had won re-election. By 1976, the anti-détente forces in his administration were well-ensconced.

[5] "Disaffected liberals—soon to become the intellectual forerunners of neoconservatism—joined with traditional conservative groups, ethnic blue-collar workers in the Northeast, defense industrialists and business entrepreneurs in the South and Southwest, and evangelical Christians. These business, ethnic, and religious groups had little in common but their fear of Soviet power, their antipathy to atheistic communism, and a desire to redirect what they regarded as a wrong-headed liberal tendency in American politics. They believed strongly that the United States had to rebuild its military strength." (456)

Although embedded in domestic and international configurations of power and under the influence of messianic ideologies impelling their superstates toward deadly conflict, when it counted most, U.S. and Soviet leaders were able to act with restraint. A couple of final questions for the author: does he mean to say that when the Soviet Union gave up the "struggle for the soul of mankind" at the end of the 1980s, that the contest was over and had been won by the United States? And what have been the consequences of assuming, as many did, that this was the case?

Review by Geir Lundestad, Norwegian Nobel Institute[1]

Melvyn P. Leffler is one of the very leading historians in the world on the Cold War. His *Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (1992) established his reputation as an extremely competent, left-of-center, but fair-minded historian on the origins of the Cold War. Scholars have been referring to the book ever since, although we may not have read all of its 689 pages as thoroughly as perhaps we should have.

Since 1992 Leffler has published a couple of smaller books, with others or by himself, and written at least two groundbreaking articles, also largely on the origins of the Cold War. These have served to strengthen his reputation further. So, we have indeed been waiting for his next big book. Now the book is here, fifteen years after his previous major work.

Geir Lundestad *was born in 1945. Since 1990 he has been the Director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute and the Secretary of the Norwegian Nobel Committee (the committee awards the Nobel Peace Prize.) After having been a professor of history and American Civilization at the University of Tromsø from 1974 to 1990, since 1991 he has been an adjunct professor of international history at the University of Oslo. He has published a number of books on the origins of the Cold War and on American-European relations after 1945. His most recent book is* The United States and Western Europe Since 1945. From "Empire" by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift *(Oxford University Press, 2003, paperback, 2005).*

For the Soul of Mankind has many of the qualities one expects to find in a book by Melvyn Leffler. He has looked at a vast number of sources; he has read practically all there is to read on his topic; he has digested it all and has given his book its own special form. The bibliography comes to 25 densely packed pages. Since he, like several other Western Cold War historians, does not speak Russian he is in debt to those institutions that have made the Russian-language sources available in English. In addition, friends, other researchers, and students have helped him translate documents from several different languages. They are all properly thanked in the acknowledgments. In fact, it should be mentioned that the Norwegian Nobel Institute and I are also thanked for having hosted Leffler for a month at the Institute, a great pleasure indeed.

Such thoroughness is what one expects from an academic of Mel Leffler's stature. It comes as a welcome surprise, however, to discover that he has become a more lively writer than he used to be. Many historians are or have become excellent writers. Leffler has also moved up considerably in that category. His readers will appreciate this. I must say that it was more fun to read the 586 pages of the present work than the 689 of his previous book. He brings the story alive by quoting copiously from the memoirs, letters, and documents of the protagonists in Washington and Moscow. It is another matter that occasionally the quotes become too long and too many and the analysis perhaps briefer than it could have been.

[1] I thank Olav Njølstad for useful comments on an early version of this review.

In his history of the Cold War Leffler achieves many things. We have been waiting for his updated analysis of the many points of contention in the huge Cold War historical debate. Leffler is fascinated by ideology, as are so many others, occasionally going quite far in stressing this point: "Ideology shaped perceptions – this is one of the great lessons of the Cold War–accentuating fears, highlighting opportunities, and warping rational assessments of interests in Washington and Moscow." (458) Yet, he is also open to other factors: geopolitics, great leaders, historical memory, domestic opinion, interest groups, the role of allies and clients, etc. At one point he even argues about Stalin that "he was acting like a Russian tsar, seeking every opportunity to enhance the security and power of his country."(31) Then you begin to wonder about his over-all emphasis on ideology. On the whole, however, "[his] desire was to follow the trail of the evidence, keeping in mind the many persuasive interpretations of great-power behaviour during the Cold War." (6) Yes, this "is a naïve statement", as Leffler himself admits, but still eminently sensible, at least for a historian. Social scientists may have more to say about such a statement.

As one expects, Leffler is exceedingly well-informed about virtually all aspects of the Cold War. He has useful comments on crises in many different parts of the world. The Cold War was global, or, better, from its origins in Europe, in the 1960s and particularly in the 1970s it became more and more global. In the new debate on the geographical origins of the Cold War, Leffler will have nothing of the new Third World focus: "For decision makers in Moscow and Washington, as in all European capitals, no question was more important than the future of Germany." (8) I definitely support his interpretation on this point.

In dealing with the American presidents involved in the Cold War, Leffler draws convincing and well-informed portraits. His analysis of Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan is the most interesting. Carter has often been given rather short shrift by historians, who see him (at least initially) as not being very knowledgeable about foreign affairs, and then trying to navigate as best he could in the growing split between national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski and secretary of state Cyrus Vance. Leffler sees Carter as more of his own man, eager to protect détente, optimistic about the position of the United States, remaining "steadfast", a man of "equanimity." (for instance 324-25, 328)

In the discussion about Regan's role, Leffler adopts a middle position. He categorically states that "It was Gorbachev who ended the Cold War." (448). He thus rejects the many American triumphalist interpretations that give Reagan most of the credit. At the same time, however, he is generous in describing Reagan's contributions. "What was unique about Reagan was his willingness to reach out to a leadership he abhorred, men whose values he detested; to appreciate the concerns of his adversary; and to learn from experience." (341) He was also crucial in making the American right support the necessary understandings with the Soviet Union. "Reagan could lead the American people to accept the end of the Cold War–on American terms, of course." (464) In fact, he went so far that even his own Vice-President wondered whether Reagan had gone too far. This, too, sounds quite reasonable and sensible to me.

A crucial point is what has been Leffler's purpose in writing this book. Most of us would have been pleased simply to write yet another book on the Cold War. Leffler, however, insists that "This book is not … a narrative history of the Cold War." (7) Rather he has chosen five "moments" during the Cold War "when officials in Moscow and Washington thought about avoiding or modulating the extreme tension and hostility between the United States and the Soviet Union." Again and again he insists that the leaders on the two sides "believed they had choices to make." (7) Supplementing his repeated references to human agency and contingency in history, Leffler states that "Their often agonizing decisions were far less predetermined than one might think." (8) In fact, "This is a history of lost opportunities." (9)

This is a problematical point since what in fact happened did happen for a reason. The Cold War ended under Reagan, Bush and Gorbachev while relatively little happened, in the way of ending the Cold War, under Truman and Stalin, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Khrushchev, Carter and Brezhnev. It is also somewhat curious, to put it mildly, that the Nixon-Kissinger years, when détente clearly went the farthest before Reagan and Gorbachev, is studied only as a subsection in the chapter on Carter and Brezhnev. Even in his introductory generalizations Leffler states about the leaders mentioned that "Yet in their quest for salvation and vindication, they made decisions that even by their own calculations perpetuated an often self-defeating conflict. " (9) Even in the very same sentence where he refers to "the history of lost opportunities", he continues by stating that "it shows that opportunities are lost when leaders who wield great power are engulfed by circumstance and entrapped by ideology and memory." (9)

Yes, the leaders were indeed engulfed by circumstance and entrapped by ideology and memory. And Leffler demonstrates how this was the case, in chapter after chapter. So, in what sense were these then really lost opportunities? True, there were examples of serious misperceptions. As Leffler shows, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 was certainly not a push for the oil resources of the Persian Gulf. (457-58) Soviet leaders sometimes seriously misread US intentions, as for instance in 1983 with the Able Archer exercise. (356, 358) Yet, there were not really that many examples of such obvious misreading of the other side's intentions. And, again, the examples that exist happened for a reason. On the whole the perception of the other side was so deeply entrenched that one would be tempted to conclude that the Cold War was an over-determined phenomenon.

This is actually borne out in chapter after chapter of Leffler's analysis. In the chapter on Truman and Stalin he insists again and again that "Stalin did not want a rift with the Western powers" (53) and that "Truman did not seek a showdown." (56) In fact, "Neither Truman nor Stalin wanted a cold war." (57) Occasionally Leffler makes the two protagonists much more similar than they were, as when he writes about Stalin and Truman that "They were not inclined to tolerate opposition." (48) That may have been true, but the consequences suffered by their opponents were rather different.

So why, then, did the Cold War develop? Leffler's answer is clear: "The Cold War came because conditions in the international system created the risks that Truman and Stalin could not accept and opportunities they could not resist. Neither the president of the most

powerful country the world had ever known nor the cruelest dictator the world had ever witnessed was in control of events." (57-58) Leffler's final words in the chapter on Stalin, Truman, and the origins of the Cold War are the following: "They could not do otherwise in an international order that engendered so much fear and so much opportunity."(83) So, where exactly is the lost opportunity here?

The procedure is very much the same in the ensuing chapters. In the chapter about the years after Stalin's death, we read much about various plans on the Soviet side to bring a solution to the German problem. Malenkov and Eisenhower agreed that "Compromise and conciliation were essential. President Eisenhower said there was a chance for peace. There was a chance, Malenkov emphasized, but it demanded deeds from the United States as well as the Soviet Union." (122) In the end, however, on this point too Leffler's conclusion about the United States and the Soviet Union is that "neither of their leaders could liberate himself from his fears or transcend his ideological makeup." About Kennedy, Johnson, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev the concluding words are "They had nowhere to go once they escaped from Armageddon but back to the Cold War." (233) About Carter and Brezhnev we read much about their initial hopes for détente, but, again, the conclusion is that détente "foundered when forces of inexorable change in a dynamic world accentuated their sense of vulnerability and vindicated domestic opponents, who from the outset had never believed that détente was a suitable framework to compete for the soul of mankind." (337)

In summing up the years from 1945 to 1985 Leffler emphasizes that "The Cold War emerged and persisted for four decades because these leaders were trapped by their ideas and ideals and beleaguered by the dangers and opportunities that lurked in the international system." (452) This is not particularly new; in fact it is pretty much what all of us who have written about the Cold War have argued. Or, worse, the conclusion is so abstract that it is difficult to determine exactly what it really means: "The Cold War lasted as long as it did because of the way in which American and Soviet ideas intersected with evolving conditions of the international system." (452)

Three additional points should be mentioned. First, there might be a problem with the definition of détente. In the book détente appears to be virtually anything from minor efforts to reduce tension, for instance through limited arms control agreements, to more full-fledged efforts to end the confrontation itself. There is a big difference between "modulating" and "avoiding" or eliminating tension. The discussion would sometimes have benefited from a clearer statement about where on this continuum the effort in question was located. One way of rephrasing this is to say that all the efforts before Gorbachev were efforts entirely or at least largely within the Cold War system. Only Gorbachev, with support from Reagan, did away with the system as such.

Second, the Cold War was a conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union, but the two did of course have allies around the world. On the whole Leffler tries to include the allies where they fit into his concentration on the two protagonists. The obvious points are there. We do learn about the European influence on the origins of NATO, about Churchill's efforts for a tripartite summit after Stalin's death, about the international diplomacy on

Germany, about the European roots of the Helsinki process, about the role of the Eastern European peoples in that *annus mirabilis* 1989. Yet, it has to be said that Leffler's focus remains that of the two superpowers. For instance, Eisenhower's interest in détente looks rather less impressive in the considerable European literature on Churchill's summit efforts than it does from inside the Eisenhower administration, where John Foster Dulles quickly becomes the standard of comparison. Again, Leffler has of course consulted this literature; he just does not think it is particularly relevant for him.

Finally, any book of this size is bound to have a certain number of mistakes. Even as meticulous a researcher as Leffler has his share. Munich and the relinquished slices of Czechoslovakia took place in 1938, not in 1939 (18); Jaruzelski proclaimed martial law in Poland in December 1981, not 1982 (341); Gorbachev of course came to power in 1985, not 1986 (449); the Communists and their allies indeed triumphed in the May 1946 elections in Czechoslovakia (454).

Review by Elizabeth Edwards Spalding, Claremont McKenna College

John Lewis Gaddis of Yale University—where, more fittingly now than when he left Ohio University for Yale, he holds the Robert A. Lovett chair in history—may be dean of the Cold War historians, but Melvyn Leffler, the Edward Stettinius professor of history at the University of Virginia, is in a position to compete with Gaddis. Both scholars have written landmark books—*Strategies of Containment* and *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War* by Gaddis and *A Preponderance of Power* by Leffler—and their work has informed much of the American academic debate about U.S. foreign policy in the Cold War.

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For those readers who are unfamiliar with the debate, here is a quick overview of the four main schools of Cold War thought (with occasional blending thereof). Realism, the oldest approach, holds that the Cold War arose out of the power vacuum at the end of World War II and that American and Soviet leaders pursued their respective national interests because of power politics. Rising to ascendancy in the 1960s and 1970s, revisionism counters that American presidents' policy choices, along with the market structure of capitalism, caused the East-West conflict, while the Soviet Union was a revolutionary power seeking political and economic equality. Starting in the 1970s with newly available materials from the Truman Presidential Library and other U.S. sources, post-revisionism aims to make realism more nuanced and presents the Cold War as a series of mutual misunderstandings between the United States and the Soviet Union. Finally, from the late 1980s to the present, corporatism merges the power politics of realism with the core economic arguments of revisionism, portraying the United States, the USSR, and their respective leaders as rational actors who constantly sought security through their strategic and economic policy choices. Although historians have dominated the debate between and among the four schools of thought, political scientists have weighed in heavily over the years. Indeed, none of these approaches would be possible without political science, since realism and neo-Marxist revisionism originated in that discipline. And it should be noted that the roots for these schools are found in practical politics rather than scholarly writing: witness the work of diplomat-scholar George F. Kennan, diplomat Charles Bohlen, and journalist Walter Lippmann for the realists and progressive politician Henry A. Wallace and, to an extent, Lippmann (again) for the revisionists.

Gaddis typically receives credit for helping found post-revisionism, although his recent work, especially his popular *The Cold War: A New History*, is closer to a traditional or

orthodox understanding of the Cold War. (Traditionalism or orthodoxy—concluding that the United States had no choice but to fight the Cold War because a totalitarian, communist regime was engaged in the conflict—has long been out of favor as a legitimate school of Cold War thought.) While downplaying the connection in the past, Leffler has been associated with corporatism, and recurring themes of corporatism run through *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War*. But Leffler's current scholarship seems most at home with realism. In fact, *For the Soul of Mankind* develops a new, post-open-archives, post-corporatist, realist interpretation of the Cold War. As Gaddis continues work on the authorized biography of the late George Kennan, Leffler offers a book that is strikingly Kennanesque, especially in its focus on diplomatic leaders and their strategic intentions. At the same time, reflecting an updated post-Cold War perspective, Leffler blends classic Kennanesque realism with modern-day structural realism.

Leffler taps, absorbs, and comments on a wide range of archival and secondary materials from the United States and the former Soviet Union, and he plainly intends *For the Soul of Mankind* to straddle the scholarly and popular markets. Leffler posits five key periods in the East-West conflict in which, he says, the outcome could have gone another way; throughout the book, he grapples with the proposition that nothing about the Cold War was predetermined. The five moments—Truman and Stalin at the postwar dawn of the Cold War, Eisenhower and Malenkov after Stalin's death, Kennedy and Johnson with Khrushchev during and after the Cuban Missile Crisis, Carter and Brezhnev amid the crumbling of détente, and Reagan and Bush with Gorbachev in the final years of the Cold War—are revealing picks. Notably, Leffler does not select a Nixon-Brezhnev moment, although he briefly covers Nixon and Kissinger's diplomatic efforts. By realist standards, however, the Nixon era was the high point in Cold War diplomacy, when both sides agreed that the superpowers had stabilized the international system through mutual recognition of each other's status, influence, and political sophistication and through nuclear parity. It is not until the advent of Gorbachev that diplomacy again becomes so interesting to realists and to Leffler.

While still firmly a historian, Leffler aims to apply political science, mostly international relations (IR), concepts to the political leaders and political moments he has chosen. But he has chosen impoverished aspects of IR theory with which to frame his detailed historical research. The problem is most evident in Leffler's central thesis, which is clearly stated in the introduction and conclusion but becomes muddled in the interior case studies. Leffler stresses that he wants to account for human agency as a factor in starting, prolonging, and ending the Cold War (6-8). At first, this focus seemingly steers him toward realism, in which political leaders, representing their nation-states, direct international relations. For realists, as for Leffler, political leaders act according to their own national interests and what is best for the security of their respective countries. But Leffler also suggests the Cold War was, ultimately, subordinated to the system or environment in which the conflict took place (8-9, 57-58). This inference moves him toward structural realism, in which the (in)security structure of the international environment supersedes human agency and discrete national interests. To support his thesis, he probably would have done better to hew more closely to Kennan and remain centered on the individual leaders and their political intentions; or he needed to clarify if he thinks structure trumps all other factors or

if the two points of view can be reconciled with each other. Instead, the unresolved tension between Kennanesque realism and structural realism leads to confusion.

Leffler also wants to account for ideology and admits that this factor has often been left out of methodological analyses of the Cold War; he talks about ideology in his introduction and his conclusion. But neither Kennanesque nor structural realism permits for a meaningful exploration of the role of ideology in international politics, and Leffler is done a disservice by the IR theories he has turned to. His interior case studies generally contradict his assertion of ideology's importance to the Cold War. In Leffler's breakdown, Truman was practical, liked things in black and white (47), did not know how to deal with the twists and turns in Soviet policy (55), and unfortunately used ideological language that resonated with the American people rather than rhetoric that was focused on economic interests (65, 71); although steeped in an ideological mind-set, Stalin was pragmatic and opportunistic (14), acted like a Russian tsar seeking to enhance the security and power of his country (31), and wanted to collaborate with Truman but had to respond to the United States in order to defend Soviet security and national interests (52-54, 69); everybody between Truman-Stalin and Reagan-Gorbachev got caught in a structural, international status quo; Reagan saw nuclear war as the paramount global threat, changed the purpose of U.S. strength into the basis for talking with the Soviets (358-59), and learned to inspire trust rather than engender fear (448); and Gorbachev de-ideologized international politics, allowed the overthrow of communist governments in Eastern Europe, and ended the Cold War (448).

The longest examination of ideology in *For the Soul of Mankind* is Leffler's curious treatment of Gorbachev's point of view. Leffler presents Gorbachev as both an earnest reformer and enlightened socialist, who was security-driven rather than ideological. When Gorbachev acted in an ideological manner, submits Leffler, it was because he had trouble with his Politburo; but there is no evidence given that Gorbachev lost control of his Politburo. Leffler seems influenced by the pluralist model of Soviet comparative studies, which has largely been discredited by materials from archives opened in the last fifteen years. He also confuses short-term tactics with long-run grand strategy. With hindsight, he recasts Gorbachev's agenda as driven by the supreme goal of ending the Cold War. Gorbachev emerges in this depiction as a global humanitarian (412), rather than the Soviet premier who was trying to hold together the USSR. A Soviet tactic may have been to say that Moscow had no intentions to expand its power or influence in the future; but Gorbachev's grand strategy—as he himself explained it—was to revitalize communism at home so that it would also succeed abroad. For Leffler, Gorbachev defensively wanted to withdraw from Afghanistan, and the United States dragged things out through their offensive actions (409-13). There is no consideration that strategic and economic pressure from all—especially American—sides forced Gorbachev to see that the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan was weakening the Soviet empire. Indeed, Leffler maintains that the United States' application of strength had nothing to do with changes in Soviet behavior (414-15).

In the end, it is difficult to determine Leffler's precise definition of ideology. As with Kennan's realism, any ideology—including that held by those who live in free, open regimes—distorts reality (52). Ideology seems to be more about fear and insecurity than anything else. It is alternately described as or equated with passions, fears, vulnerabilities,

instincts, memories, and aspirations (72, 79-80, as examples). Again, Leffler is similar to Kennan in these regards, including intimating that ideology embodies a flawed belief system that often hindered rational diplomatic professionals from following rational strategic and economic national interests.

Another area in which Leffler is Kennanesque is in how he portrays the nuclear question. One of the reasons for the split between Secretary of State Dean Acheson and George Kennan in the late 1940s is that Kennan began to regard the atomic, then nuclear, factor as overriding the Cold War. But Truman's strategy of containment always presented the nuclear aspect as derivative of the Cold War, rather than the other way around. Eisenhower's MAD and Kennedy/Johnson's flexible response doctrines placed the nuclear challenge in the same framework. It was Nixon and Kissinger, the realists, who equated the arms race with the Cold War and conducted diplomatic talks in a political as well as nuclear setting of parity between the superpowers. It was Carter, the anti-realist, who wanted to escape the East-West conflict and redesign world politics and, instead, did his part to destroy détente. And it was Reagan who returned to Truman's containment of peace through strength and freedom and pursued the strategic defense initiative (SDI) in order to make it immaterial which aggressive power had nuclear weapons. Like Kennan, Leffler also fails to see that the Soviets situated nuclear weapons in the Cold War context. Soviet premiers consistently viewed gaining nuclear strength as a powerful weapon in and of itself and for negotiations on their terms. To avoid financial disaster and because he knew Reagan was serious about SDI, Gorbachev conceded to strategic arms reductions talks on American terms; but it was not something he wanted to do.

By using a blend of Kennan's realism and structural realism, Leffler does not account for regime distinctions. On the American side, he overlooks the importance of self-government, liberal democracy, or liberal internationalism. Except for Carter, all of the presidents Leffler considers were compatible liberal internationalists. Further, despite some deviations along the way, Eisenhower, Kennedy/Johnson, and Reagan/Bush followed Truman's lead. Reagan was unique in that he started with Truman's approach and then took containment to its logical conclusion in the circumstances he faced and forged in the 1980s. (Leffler dismisses NSC 68, so he denies the comprehensiveness of Truman's containment.) And on the Soviet side, Leffler does not explain communist totalitarianism, even though he calls Stalin evil in his conclusion and describes some of the atrocities under his rule. The rest of the book reads as if liberal democracy and communist totalitarianism were two equally viable systems, facing similar economic challenges and just trying to guarantee the security of their respective citizens. By the time Leffler gets to Gorbachev, he uncritically presents a wealth of quotes from the former Soviet premier and misses that acceleration (uskorenie) of socialism was as essential to Gorbachev's project as openness (glasnost) and restructuring (perestroika).

In agreement with both classical realism and structural realism, Leffler contends that the Cold War was about external behavior. Again, he sets aside regime distinctions, which are grounded in the notion that the foundational concepts at the heart of the nation-state define its ideology. Leffler does not base his examination of Soviet intentions and actions on the nature of that regime, and so is left with a superficial consideration of ideology. This

is perhaps Leffler's most Kennanesque theme. The moral equivalence so long associated with realism is converted into a cultural relativism that comes to the fore in Leffler's analysis: Both sides in the East-West conflict were the same not only because they were great powers in the conventional realist sense but also because they each had ideologies, fears, aspirations, and insecurities.

Leffler argues "that officials in Washington and Moscow intermittently grasped the consequences of the Cold War, glimpsed the possibilities of détente, and yearned for peace, but they could not escape their fears or relinquish their dreams." (8) In the end, ideology becomes merely an irrational expression of dreams and fears and an impediment to détente. But the Cold War was an ideological and strategic battle for, as Leffler puts it, the soul of mankind. If one does not understand the importance of ideology to the exploration of the political, moral, military, and economic elements of the Cold War, one is left with only a realist's insecurities and a revisionist's reductionism. Without understanding the opposing ideologies and regime differences at the center of the Cold War, the defining essence of the Cold War is misconstrued. Because of this chain of misinterpretations, one cannot accurately define the strategy or the end goal of the statesman, the diplomat, or the tyrant.

Melvyn Leffler rightly says both American and Soviet leaders yearned for peace. But as they espoused opposing ideologies, they also held and pursued opposite meanings of the term. Using the same vocabulary did not mean the Americans and the Soviets understood the words in the same way. For all the flaws of liberal democracy in practice and for all the challenges that the United States has faced as leader of the "free world," it is a good thing that the Soviet definition of peace never prevailed.

Review by Jeremi Suri, Professor of History, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The Cold War, Melvyn Leffler writes in his superb new book, "is about men and their ideas and their fears and their hopes." "[O]fficials in Washington and Moscow," Leffler argues, "intermittently grasped the consequences of the Cold War, glimpsed the possibilities of détente, and yearned for peace, but they could not escape their fears or relinquish their dreams. Around the globe peoples were struggling to define their future and disputing the benefits of alternative ways of life, so the Cold War was indeed a struggle for the soul of mankind" (p. 8).

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Leffler's prior work—especially his prize-winning book, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War*—set the standard for analyzing the intersection of threat perception, political economy, and military power in the postwar world. He famously described the combination of prudence and foolishness that led American leaders to seek global preponderance after the Second World War: "It meant creating a world environment hospitable to U.S. interests and values; it meant developing the capabilities to overcome threats and challenges; it meant mobilizing the strength to reduce Soviet influence on its periphery; it meant undermining the appeal of communism; it meant fashioning the institutional techniques and mechanisms to manage the free world; and it meant establishing a configuration of power and a military posture so that if war erupted, the United States would prevail. If adversaries saw the handwriting on the wall, they would defer to American wishes."[1]

From a coherent strategy of "preponderance" to a "struggle for the soul of mankind," Leffler traces a number of cogent themes. First, he points to the profound insecurities that dominated American and Soviet thinking. American leaders, especially President Harry Truman, feared the growth of communist power in Eurasia. Seared by the experience of the Great Depression and the rise of fascism, they were acutely conscious of the fragility of democratic capitalism, and the threat posed by an authoritarian regime with an ideology promising to redistribute power and wealth to the masses. Soviet dictator Josef Stalin

[1] Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 19. See also, on page 498: "Initially content with the role of financial hegemon, U.S. officials came to believe that they had to offer economic assistance in amounts they had not anticipated; they had to establish linkages with foreign elites in ways they had not envisioned; and they had to incur strategic commitments and assume political-military responsibilities in places they had not contemplated. These new tactics were deemed essential to establish a configuration of power that safeguarded U.S. security and that institutionalized Washington's preponderant influence in the international system."

feared exactly the reverse—the relative weakness of his communist regime, Russia's vulnerability to attack and encirclement (proven twice in his own lifetime), and the rise of a revitalized postwar Germany. In his new book, Leffler quotes Stalin expressing sentiments that he and most of his successors in the Kremlin until Mikhail Gorbachev shared: "I HATE THE GERMANS…It's impossible to destroy the Germans for good, they will still be around…That is why we, the Slavs, must be ready in case the Germans can get back on their feet and launch another attack against the Slavs" (p. 30-31).

Second, both of Leffler's Cold War books show how American and Soviet leaders addressed their fears by preparing for the worst-case threats and seizing apparent opportunities for preventive action—strategic defense through political and economic expansion. Leffler is particularly good at documenting the Soviet side of this dynamic in his new book, drawing on a wealth of newly available materials. Time and again—from Berlin to Cuba to Vietnam to Afghanistan—he argues that leaders in Washington and Moscow took what appeared to be safe gambles in an international system filled with mistrust and grave danger. They deployed more weapons, intervened in more places, and relied on greater public bombast to show strength rather than weakness, courage rather than cowardice. Leffler is clearest on this point in *For the Soul of Mankind*, where he devotes an excellent chapter to President Dwight Eisenhower's actions after Stalin's death. Leffler shows that Eisenhower, like British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, wanted to pursue peace with Stalin's successors. Despite what Leffler describes as promising signals from the Kremlin, Eisenhower remained acutely conscious of Western vulnerabilities. The president sought peace, but only by building strength as a hedge against the treachery and aggression of the adversary. Leffler explains the thinking of Eisenhower and his closest advisors: "The United States should not ignore the prospect of negotiating agreements with the Kremlin…but those agreements had to comport with U.S. security interests. Otherwise, Eisenhower and [Secretary of State John Foster] Dulles preferred to use America's superior power to win the Cold War rather than settle on terms that might prove dangerous" (p. 134).

Here we have the classic "security dilemma." Eisenhower and his successors perceived their actions as defensive, but they appeared offensive to their counterparts in the Kremlin. The same was true in reverse, Leffler shows, when Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev and his successors sought to increase their security in Berlin and Afghanistan.[2]

A third theme in both of Leffler's Cold War books is that policy is about difficult human choices. He focuses in great depth on the pressures leaders faced at home and abroad after 1945, but Leffler ultimately argues that these pressures did not determine outcomes. Leaders still had options that they weighed and chose among. Truman decided to overstate the postwar threat to American interests, and he "became a prisoner of his own rhetoric." (*For the Soul of Mankind*, page 71.) As described above, Eisenhower chose not to take risks for a new opening to the Soviet Union in 1953, according to Leffler. *For the Soul of Mankind*

[2] For two classic accounts of the "security dilemma," see Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30 (January 1978), 167-215; John Herz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 2 (January 1950), 157-80.

further chronicles Khrushchev's erratic aggression and retreat in the early 1960s, Kennedy's hesitance to pursue détente after the Cuban Missile Crisis, Johnson decision to escalate in Vietnam, and Brezhnev and Carter's mutual efforts to show strength before negotiation in the late 1970s. None of these leaders saw their choices as ideal or optimal. They reflected calculations of costs and benefits, toleration of lesser evils, and assessments of probable consequences. The choices were difficult—"agonizing" Leffler shows (8).

Taken together, *A Preponderance of Power* and *For the Soul of Mankind* should dissuade readers from common criticisms of policy-makers for being naïve, thoughtless, or particularly self-serving. Although he condemns inhumane actions—including a description of Stalin as "the cruelest dictator the world had ever witnessed" (*For the Soul of Mankind*, 58)[3]—Leffler gives readers an appreciation for how difficult it was to make effective policy in the Cold War; how hard it was to escape the choices that contributed to superpower hostility, domestic intolerance, and Third World intervention. For all their contrary intentions, leaders were "beleaguered by the dangers and opportunities that lurked in the international system," according to Leffler (*For the Soul of Mankind*, 452.) Leffler goes so far—perhaps too far—to argue that Stalin and Truman "could not do otherwise in an international order that engendered so much fear and so much opportunity" (*For the Soul of Mankind*, 83.) Similarly, he contends that Khrushchev, Kennedy, and Johnson had "nowhere to go once they escaped from Armageddon but back to Cold War" (*For the Soul of Mankind*, 233.)

Cold War policy decisions were very difficult, and perhaps they were even somewhat predictable in Leffler's account. Reading from chapter-to-chapter in *For the Soul of Mankind*, one begins to feel the Shakespearian proportions of the narrative. Every major Soviet and American postwar leader before the 1980s sought to build a new basis for peace, but each of them ultimately chose security through military strength and foreign intervention. Leaders consistently deemed military cuts and foreign withdrawals too risky to put into practice. Leaders consistently chose to consider far reaching arms control and geopolitical negotiations only in the future, not in the present. This was predictable, not inevitable. In the *For the Soul of Mankind*, Leffler chronicles many of these choices (in 1945-48, 1953-54, 1962-65, and 1975-1980) as understandable, but still tragic "lost opportunities" (9).

This is the most significant methodological difference between Leffler's two books. *A Preponderance of Power* explained and evaluated difficult policy choices; *For the Soul of Mankind* posits an alternative. The book was conceptualized and written with knowledge of how the Cold War ended, peacefully and rapidly after the mid-1980s. The final detailed chapter of the book on Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev (and George H.W. Bush) is the most original and ground-breaking part of Leffler's recent writing. It is a chapter about the end of the Cold War that reframes the entire post-1945 narrative. Drawing on the remarkably rich collection of letters, diaries, speeches, and memoranda available from

[3] Leffler's detailed account of Stalin's cruelty is persuasive and very well-supported. Calling him "the cruelest dictator the world had ever witnessed" is probably a bit excessive, and certainly unnecessary.

Reagan and Gorbachev, Leffler argues that these two men transcended the limits of their predecessors. Both echoed common desires for peace, but both also showed extraordinary courage and determination in its pursuit. Time and again, Leffler persuasively chronicles their individual actions, often opposed by their closest advisers, to replace conflict with cooperation.

From his first years in office, long before Mikhail Gorbachev ascended to the top position in the Kremlin, Reagan wrote personal letters to Soviet leaders—Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov, and Konstantin Chernenko—trying to get serious negotiations started for the elimination of nuclear weapons and the opening of frozen Cold War boundaries in Europe. "What was unique about Reagan," Leffler writes, "was his willingness to reach out to a leadership he abhorred, men whose values he detested; to appreciate the concerns of the adversary; and to learn from experience" (341). Repeating himself for emphasis, Leffler hammers home the point that Reagan showed a sincere "willingness to talk" with his adversaries (347). "Reagan's greatest contribution to ending the Cold War," according to Leffler, "was not the fear he engendered but the trust he inspired" (448). How congenial and effective Reagan appears in retrospect.

Gorbachev also shines—brightest of all the leaders—in Leffler's account. He "ended the Cold War" (448). Despite his private overtures, in the mid-1980s Reagan continued to speak of an "evil empire" and a controversial Strategic Defense Initiative, and he flaunted increased American support to the forces fighting the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. Unlike his predecessors, Gorbachev chose not to respond tit-for-tat. Instead, he endeavored to eliminate the sources of Cold War conflict that undermined Soviet domestic development. Gorbachev was a "devoted communist" (370), but not a dogmatic communist. He believed that the Soviet Union could live with its capitalist adversaries and through the pursuit of peace better the lives of citizens around the world. Gorbachev wanted to reallocate military spending for building a more humane communist society, and he wanted to reduce the risks of war and other costly conflict. Gorbachev worked to reconfigure the "zero-sum game of the Cold War," according to Leffler. That was "his greatest achievement" (460).

For the first time in the Cold War, by the end of 1985 both the United States and the Soviet Union had bold, even radical, leaders willing to take the kinds of risks for peace that were, Leffler shows in earlier chapters, intolerable for Stalin, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, or Brezhnev. Reagan and Gorbachev were confident, visionary, and even foolhardy men. They were also pragmatists willing to adapt and change, eager to work with friends they could find among their enemies.

Negotiation and compromise on nuclear weapons, conventional forces, and eventually the future of Germany and Eastern Europe brought the Cold War to an end. Gorbachev made "most of the concessions" (450), according to Leffler, but Reagan consistently encouraged this process by meeting him part of the way. Gorbachev needed, Leffler explains, "sympathetic listeners in Washington," and Reagan played that role with gusto (462). The risks were less for Reagan, but they were still real. He and Gorbachev invested their relationship with trust and even a commitment to long-term partnership. This was a truly extraordinary moment, but it could have happened earlier. Leffler shows that we must

respect the careful choices that kept the Cold War in place for more than four decades, but we must also recognize that it might have ended earlier—or at least taken a less dangerous turn—if leaders had acted more like Reagan and Gorbachev. Reagan and Gorbachev's achievements make one contemplate how things might have been different if Eisenhower had been more bold, if Khrushchev had been more controlled, if Kennedy and Johnson had given détente greater priority, if Carter and Brezhnev had not become subsumed in crises throughout the Third World.

For the Soul of Mankind is a tribute to Leffler's energy and insight as a scholar. He has expanded the chronology from *A Preponderance of Power*, scoured American archival sources for five different decades, and incorporated some of the most important archival findings from the former Soviet bloc. Leffler has also seriously studied the work of very diverse scholars, incorporating their analyses into his account. *For the Soul of Mankind* is the best book published to date on the dynamics of the Soviet-American diplomatic relationship during the Cold War.

The main shortcoming in Leffler's distinguished work is conceptual. Although he is a master at analyzing the dilemmas and difficulties of foreign policy decision-making by political leaders, his definition of decision-making remains somewhat narrow. Powerful leaders – a very small group – receive information, assess conditions, define aims, and then act in Leffler's narrative. The main action for Leffler centers on how leaders interact with one another. He leaves little room for other influences. In *For the Soul of Mankind*, this is a problem compounded by the "moments" he chooses to analyze, and those he neglects. Chapters on 1956, 1968, and the lead-up to the Helsinki Accords of 1975 would surely focus on the crucial role played by protesters, dissidents, intellectuals, non-state actors, and international organizations in the formulation of policy. In each of those periods, it would seem that leaders reacted at least as much to the kinds of groups largely absent from Leffler's narrative. One would also suspect that these "outsider" groups played a more significant role in some of the periods that Leffler does cover, especially the late 1970s. Robert English, Matthew Evangelista, and James Mann have documented some of this story, and it makes Brezhnev, Carter, Gorbachev, and Reagan less dominant as actors in explaining the end of détente, the rise of "new thinking," and what has followed.[4]

In addition to influence, one must ask about implementation. Leffler documents in terrific detail what leaders intended to do, and what they thought they were doing. Is that a fair representation for how nations act in the international system? Leffler's chapter on 1953-1954 is a prime example. Even if Eisenhower had been a little bolder in approaching the post-Stalin leadership, was it possible for him and Georgi Malenkov to pull off a shift in superpower relations? Didn't they face too much resistance and stagnation within their

[4] See Robert English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, Intellectuals, and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000); Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces: The Trans-National Movement to End the Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999); James Mann, *The Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet* (New York: Viking, 2004). Leffler cites English and Evangelista in the *For the Soul of Mankind*, and I know that he is deeply familiar with all three books. I think, however, he could take their arguments about broader intellectual and policy influence more seriously.

own governments? If Eisenhower could not implement the military budget cuts he wanted, how could he get the foreign policy bureaucracy to turn so quickly after the searing experience of the Stalin years? Malenkov could not even keep himself in power. How could he reciprocate any overture from Washington effectively? These objections are not designed to diminish the capabilities of strong leaders, but to show that the difficulties of decision-making go beyond the intentions and actions of presidents and general secretaries. Opportunities were lost and gained in the Cold War because of policy implementation in places far from the White House and the Kremlin. Looking at policy implementation also provides a much more complicated picture of Reagan and Gorbachev—both of whom allowed Cold War-style violence to continue in Latin America and the Baltic States well past when they appeared intent on ending the Cold War.

For the Soul of Mankind refers to ideology, memories, and the international system on numerous occasions. Leffler clearly recognizes that these are crucial elements of decision-making. The reader, however, only gets a very vague sense of what they are and how they really affected policy. Leffler effectively documents mutual distrust between capitalist and communist leaders, but ideology is about much more than that. It is a continually evolving set of beliefs, in constant negotiation among broad groups of adherents. How did Cold War ideologies evolve? How did evolving ideologies—and the controversies surrounding them—push leaders in new directions? How did leaders contribute to broader ideological change? Leffler only really addresses the latter question for Reagan and Gorbachev, in part.

Leffler persuasively describes how memories of the Second World War affected Soviet views of Germany and threats from the West. He is also masterful in assessing how the memories of the Great Depression colored American perceptions of international political economy. What about memories of Cold War events, including the Korean and Vietnam Wars? What about the manipulation, distortion, and rewriting of memories through propaganda and public culture? These are not only questions about public mobilization. Leaders are susceptible to the manipulation and distortion of memory. They are also consumers of propaganda, as Leffler admits when he describes the presence of Marxist-Leninist discourse in secret Soviet documents. Beyond the Depression and the Second World War, how did evolving memories of conflict transform Cold War decision-making?

Then there is the international system. In *For the Soul of Mankind* this comprises the fears and opportunities engendered by postwar reconstruction, decolonization, and revolutionary nationalism. How did that system of transformations, and many others, operate? How did it really affect decision-making? What was the "structure of the international system?" These are complex questions. Leffler's emphasis on the existence of an international system that is more than the sum of the biggest states is insightful, but still incomplete. What was the Cold War international system and how did it perpetuate itself?

Leffler concludes his monumental book with this powerful verdict: "The Cold War lasted as long as it did because of the ways in which American and Soviet ideas intersected with evolving conditions of the international system. U.S. and Soviet leaders thought they represented superior ways of organizing human existence…The international environment posed danger and opportunity to leaders in Moscow and Washington" (452, 454). This is

the best analysis we have to date, but it continues to hinge on a very small and self-contained set of actors. Leffler's book will surely inspire other historians (including this one) to stretch his insights into a broader framework for understanding policy and decision-making.

Author's Response by Melvyn Leffler, University of Virginia

I want to thank Geir Lundestad, Jeremi Suri, and John Harper for their warm praise, incisive criticisms, and provocative questions. They raise many important issues, not all of which I will be able to comment on here. I will also address some of the points made by Elizabeth Spalding, although I think she has misconstrued and misunderstood many aspects of my book.

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Let me begin by stressing that the book is not intended as a narrative history of the Cold War. As the reviewers note, I take several "moments" in the Cold War (1945-48, 1953-54, 1962-65, 1975-80, 1985-90), in order to grapple with its fundamental dynamics. I am essentially interested in three questions: Why did the Cold War begin? Why did it continue for more than four decades? Why did it come to an end? By selecting the five periods, I create a structure, as my commentators correctly note, that prevents me from addressing some important episodes of the Cold War. I suggest, however, that other scholars will see many of the same dynamics at work when they address other periods during the Cold War. What I lose in breadth, I think I gain in depth.

I took the first four periods because I became intellectually engaged with the proliferating evidence that officials in Moscow and Washington often wanted to avoid a Cold War, modulate it, or disengage from it. But not until the late 1980s did policymakers succeed in achieving this goal, or impulse. Why was this the case? What drove the Cold War dynamic? What enabled Reagan and Gorbachev to reverse it and escape from it?

In order to examine these episodes in the Cold War and to interrogate the evidence, I kept in mind several theoretical constructs and historical interpretations. I considered interpretations that highlight the role of power in the international system; those that focus on the influence of ideology; those that dwell on the role of interest groups, public opinion, and political culture; those that underscore the role of allies and clients; and those that stress the influence of particular leaders, of human agency. My aim, however, was not "to apply" these concepts; these very divergent theories, interpretations, and concepts were simply in the back of my mind as I studied the evidence and pondered the dynamics and complexities of each period. Would they help me grasp what was happening? Did they shed insights that would help me grapple with the evidence?

Ultimately, my interpretation integrates these factors, giving greatest stress to the intersection between ideology and the evolution of the configuration of power in the international system. But I weave in other factors, as the evidence suggested, and

sometimes those other factors were very important, indeed. I suspect that scholars with very different approaches will read my book and claim that it supports one "theory" or interpretation, or another. Actually, my reading of the evidence suggests complexity, the interrelationship of factors, and the importance of integrating divergent approaches.

I do conclude, as Geir Lundestad points out, that "The Cold War emerged and persisted for four decades because leaders were trapped by their ideas and ideals and beleaguered by the dangers and opportunities that lurked in the international system." But Lundestad then says that this conclusion is not new; "it is pretty much what all of us who have written about the Cold War have argued." Well, if "all of us" have been saying the same thing, it would be hard to grasp why there have been such heated controversies about the origins and evolution of the Cold War. Obviously, different scholars have argued very different things. Odd Arne Westad stresses the role of ideology, as do many recent accounts. Marc Trachtenberg focuses on the configuration of power. In his first book on the Cold War, John Gaddis put a heavy stress on the role of political institutions, and in more recent books he has underscored the role of Stalin and other leaders, or ideology. My book is not a rejoinder to any of these accounts. In fact, I have learned a great deal from them and from many others. My intention is to examine the sources in view of these many compelling interpretations. I show that the evidence can be understood best if we see the intersection of these variables, but I do not shy away from judging their relative explanatory power.

Lundestad claims that my analysis is abstract when I conclude (452) that "The Cold War lasted as long as it did because of the way in which American and Soviet ideas intersected with evolving conditions in the international system." Yet most of the preceding hundreds of pages illuminate what this sentence means. In terms of the international system, I stress the importance of postwar social ferment and economic dislocation (and its recurrence in different shapes and forms in the 1970s and 1980s); the configuration of power stemming from Germany's and Japan's defeat; and the salience of decolonization and revolutionary nationalism. As Lundestad says, Germany is a key to understanding the origins of the Cold War; but I stress throughout my book, that although Germany remained central to what happened (where my analysis often shares much with scholars like Trachtenberg), the Cold War dynamic was shaped hugely by the decolonization process and the perceptions of fear and opportunity that it engendered (so that parts of my book share a lot with Westad). As I see it, my analysis of the international system is far from abstract, but, of course, some scholars will see other factors in the international system, and this should contribute to more scholarly dialogue between theorists and historians.

Both Lundestad and Jeremi Suri suggest that my discussion of ideology and memory is vague. Yet throughout the book, I examine the beliefs of the key leaders, and I also show how memory shaped those beliefs. Suri raises an important point when he says that I do not consider how Cold War events themselves, like the Korean and Vietnam Wars, shaped attitudes. I think he is right to suggest that such matters must be considered, and perhaps I don't incorporate these sufficiently. I do give much greater weight to the impact of World War II, German aggression, and the Great Depression because I think the evidence points in that direction. In fact, one of the key themes of the book is how the experiences of war and the specter of German power affected every Soviet leader from Stalin to Gorbachev. But my

account is not about "flawed belief systems," as Spalding suggests. My point is not that beliefs were flawed, but that beliefs sometimes led to flawed perceptions. I try to show how this was the case for both Soviet and American leaders. And, yes, these beliefs and memories sometimes generated passion, fear, paranoia, and exhilaration. These beliefs sometimes led to murderous actions and to utopian adventurism. I am fond of the quotation by Norman Cousins, who after talking for hours with Khrushchev, noted: "a man comes to life in his paradoxes." (*Soul of Mankind*, 173-74)

Leaders are fascinating to study. Like all of us, they possess contradictory impulses, competing fears, and conflicting hopes. They usually want peace and security, and they define these goals in their own ways. But leaders are not alike, and I try to illuminate their differences. Nobody reading my first chapter should come away thinking that I approach my book with "moral equivalence." I describe in the first sections of the first chapter of my book—not in my conclusion—all the brutality and fear that Stalin inspired, but I also depict what the German occupation meant for the people of the Soviet Union and for Stalin himself. I also try to explain, as any historian must, why millions and millions of people after World War II were attracted to communism and to state planning, notwithstanding Stalin's barbarity and the brutality of his system. The historian must also account for the fact that Stalin's successors, like Khrushchev, while dedicated communists and while "soaked in the blood of their victims" (174), were also inspired by hopes of improving the lot of their people. They sincerely believed in their superior ideals. My task, as John Harper writes, was "not to moralize, but to reveal their motives and explain their actions in their own terms."

Lundestad raises a profoundly good point when he queries whether I prove the case for human agency. In fact, he incisively highlights the tension in my book about the role of human agency. On the one hand, he points out that I stress that leaders "had choices to make," that there were lost opportunities, that the Cold War was not predetermined. On the other hand, I also stress that "opportunities are lost when leaders who wield great power are engulfed by circumstance and entrapped by ideology and memory." He argues, and I suspect that many students of the Cold War would agree, that the conflict "was an over-predetermined phenomenon."

What I do in my book is wrestle with the role of human agency in relation to the more structural and ideological interpretations. I show how key leaders grappled with conflicting options; how they were torn in different directions. Neither their beliefs, nor their system of governance, nor the configuration of power dictated particular outcomes. In Moscow and Washington, there were people who believed that their nations' self-interest would be furthered by ongoing cooperation of some sort; and, in fact, Truman and Stalin (as did their successors) pondered the advantages and disadvantages of preserving some forms of collaboration, of avoiding or modulating a Cold War. Leaders did make choices, sometimes agonizing, anguished choices. And the choices they made had significant repercussions, sometimes cutting off possibilities for a relaxation of tensions; possibilities, of course, that would always be renewed at a subsequent time with indeterminate outcomes. Hubert Humphrey, I show, would have made critically different choices than LBJ had he been president rather than vice president in 1965. And the Cold

War probably would not have ended as it did if Carter had been re-elected in 1980 or if Andropov had lived, or if Yegor Ligachev, not Gorbachev, had assumed leadership in Moscow.

My point, however, is not to over-emphasize the role of human agency, but to explore the role of leaders in the context of the larger constellation of geopolitical, social, economic, ideological, and political crosscurrents. In this respect, Harper makes the important observation that I wait until the conclusion of the book to highlight some of "the contextual factors that conditioned their policy choices," for example, the structural decline of the Soviet economy and the role of the communications revolution. Perhaps I should have given more attention to some of these factors in the individual chapters, but I consciously made the choice to focus on them in the conclusion because leaders did not necessarily see the salience of these factors quite as clearly as we can see their importance in retrospect. For example, although all of us now stress the structural weaknesses of the Soviet economy, and although these weaknesses were becoming more apparent in the 1970s, I chose to emphasize them at the end of the book because during the 1970s the inadequacies of the Soviet economy did not stand out quite so starkly in comparison to the problems that were then afflicting the U.S. economy (and most Western economies). Brezhnev, I show, grasped the looming problems and recognized the failure of his system to meet the demands of his people, but he could nonetheless still convey great hopes about the future of communism because he saw that Western economies were staggering under the weight of inflation and unemployment. "Could capitalism survive," was the headline on the cover of *Time* in 1975, not *Pravda*. I made a conscious choice, therefore, to address some of these more fundamental developments in the conclusion.

But I think both Harper and Suri offer constructive criticism when they both say in their different ways that I do not pay enough attention to protest movements and grassroots political developments. Suri notes that if I had chosen 1956 or 1968, my portrait of events might have been different. Although I do wish I had taken more time in the book to illuminate and flesh out the changes in political culture that were occurring, I do not think the basic analysis of the book would be different. After all, I do focus on 1953 (when there was an uprising in East Germany) and allude to key developments during 1983 (when the anti-nuclear movement reached its zenith). I pondered how such movements and opinion affected decision-making. My conceptual approach did not prevent me from seeing the significance of these matters, but my conclusion (no doubt, arguable) was that in most instances—not all—these movements and political trends were not of decisive importance in explaining what happened. Nonetheless, they were important parts of a mix of factors. In 1953, the uprising in East Germany certainly affected decision-making in Moscow, and in 1989 developments inside Eastern Europe and East Germany certainly affected decision-making in Washington and Moscow. But in 1965, LBJ bombed North Vietnam when there were scant pressures on him to do so; Carter tried tenaciously to stay on track toward détente (or his view of it) regardless of the political groundswell against him; Reagan deployed his Pershing IIs and cruise missiles despite the huge demonstrations. In other words, throughout my book I wrestled with the relative influence of these movements compared to and in relation to the importance of beliefs, perceptions, allied pressures, and changes in the configuration of power. I do wish I had spent more time on these matters

because in indirect ways, as Suri suggests, they helped shape the beliefs of the policymakers themselves and narrowed their options. But I am not sure that my overall conclusions would be very different.

A good example of this relates to the mid-1970s. Harper and Suri focus on the absence of an examination of the policies of Nixon and Kissinger. I chose not to focus on Nixon and Kissinger because I was primarily interested in the erosion of détente, and not its origins. They rightly stress that détente was already suffering when Carter came to office, that neo-cons, Republican conservatives, and Cold War Democrats like Senator Henry Jackson had pummeled Nixon and Kissinger and had forced Ford to abjure from even using the word, "détente". But détente was still far from dead. I think I persuasively show that Brezhnev and Carter both wanted to sustain some form of détente after 1976. Both leaders, for example, resisted pressures to break off the SALT talks. Carter, of course, made some foolish moves, as I portray them, but he defied public opinion on many key foreign policy issues and refused to act just to redress his plummeting popularity. In other words, I do think Brezhnev killed the U.S.-Soviet détente by his wrenching decision to invade Afghanistan in December 1979; although détente was already badly ailing, as Suri and Harper quite correctly emphasize (and which I do not deny in my book), it disappeared from Soviet-American relations only after Soviet troops headed toward Kabul.

Suri and Harper are, of course, right that I do not explain all decisions with the same degree of thoroughness. My account of the Cuban missile crisis is highlighted in chapter three, but abbreviated, and in chapter four I note the Soviet arms build-up but do not dwell on it (except insofar as it shaped U.S. reactions). What I do say about these matters, however, is that Soviet leaders believed many of the same things about bargaining as did U.S. leaders, that is, that they had to negotiate from strength. They felt they were squeezed when they had been weak. Both sides' belief in strength, of course, nurtured the security dilemma that helped sustain the Cold War.

Therefore, I argue that what was distinctive about Ronald Reagan was his belief that strength, in fact, should be used to negotiate. I write, "He believed in strength. Strength tempered the adversary's ambitions and tamped down its expectations. But the purpose of strength was to negotiate." (464) Spalding, therefore, misrepresents my analysis when she says that I do not consider the role of strength. I did consider it very carefully, but present evidence (debatable, of course) that U.S. military capabilities were not the determining factor shaping Gorbachev's policies. Nonetheless, I realize that U.S. actions in Afghanistan and elsewhere established part of the overall context in which Gorbachev operated, although I do not think they were the prime motive for his initiatives. In fact, rather than ignoring, as Spalding says I do, the impact of U.S. actions in Afghanistan, I conclude the section on Afghanistan in my book with a conversation between Gorbachev and the Afghan Communist leader Muhammad Najibullah. Americans "were and will remain Americans," said Gorbachev. Their intention was to weaken the Soviet Union. They hoped, said Gorbachev, to "attain much else [by] exploiting our difficulties." (414)

As for Gorbachev's motives, I try to describe these throughout chapter five of my book. Again, Spalding errs when she says that I recast "Gorbachev's agenda as driven by the

supreme goal of ending the Cold War." She says that Gorbachev's supreme goal was to revitalize communism at home so that it would also succeed abroad." Paradoxically, while she misrepresents my view, our conclusions do not differ all that much (except insofar as we probably have very different notions of what Gorbachev meant by revitalizing Communism and succeeding abroad). Be that as it may, readers should know that the following is what I write in my book: "He did not want to retract Soviet power, but he believed the first priority was to refashion communism at home so that it could have a demonstrative appeal elsewhere." (460) My point throughout is that Gorbachev's foreign policies were derivative of his domestic concerns, and his approach to domestic matters evolved greatly during his years in office. Moreover, far from being influenced "by the pluralist model of Soviet comparative studies," as Spalding claims I am, I again say exactly the opposite: "Gorbachev's achievement was a uniquely personal one, although he was not alone . . . . He was general secretary of a party with a monopoly of power; traditions of deference were ingrained. When he made his fateful decisions . . ., he rarely asked the Politburo for advice or consulted with the Defense Council. . . . In a functioning democracy, Gorbachev might not have been able to make these changes; in fact, he could do so in Soviet Russia only so long as he functioned as general secretary of the party representing the dictatorship of the proletariat." (461-62)

My portrait of Gorbachev is indeed flattering because I see a man evolving in constructive ways and making wrenching decisions. He saw that the system he inherited and admired was deeply flawed, and he wanted to make it better. What that meant was unclear. I stress that, although he contributed mightily to ending the Cold War, he failed miserably to achieve his domestic goals. But does that mean, as John Harper asks me in his final queries, that the United States won the Cold War? And what have been the consequences of assuming this had been the case?

What I say at the end of my book was that the Cold War was won "by the system that could respond most effectively to people's wish for a decent living, a peaceful environment, and an opportunity for free expression, religious piety, and individual advancement." After World War II, I write, "it had been far from certain that democratic capitalism would have the capacity to avoid another depression, sustain the peace, and satisfy the yearnings of Asians and Africans for autonomy and self-determination. The Cold War tested the capacity of two alternative systems of governance and political economy to deal with the challenges of a postcolonial and post industrial age." (465)

What seems certain to me is that Soviet-style communism lost the Cold War; democratic capitalism and social democracy won the Cold War. And U.S. successes were mightily assisted by West European initiatives and triumphs in remodeling their own economies, societies, and political institutions, topics that I pay too little attention to in my book because they fell somewhat beyond its scope. And U.S. successes were also influenced significantly by developments in China in the late 1970s and 1980s. Decisions in Beijing not only complicated strategic and military policy in the Kremlin, but also signaled to the rest of the Third War that the Soviet-command model was a failure and needed to be replaced with something better; what it would be was unclear, and perhaps still is unclear.

In short, then, the battle over systems of governance is certain to continue as long as large parts of humankind are denied the things that matter most to them, including human security, food, shelter, health care, educational opportunity, and the rights to express themselves freely and practice their religion. The overriding lesson of the Cold War is that a system of governance that fails to meet the needs of its citizens and fails to adhere to its own principles and goals will eventually crumble. In that fundamental sense the Cold War was a struggle for "the soul of mankind" and that struggle is not likely to end any time soon.

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